

D&D Fight Club

Glythanna, the High Elf Drider

By Robert Wiese



Welcome to *Fight Club*! This column provides complex opponents -- or occasionally allies -- at various challenge ratings. All you have to do is choose the right CR and drop it into your game. So if you're looking for a foe that's just a little different, this column is for you!

Design Notes

Altering a monster to fit a concept designed around a different creature is not always practical, nor does it usually result in an interesting monster. Take the drider, for example. Typically, Lolth creates driders from drow who fail her test. But what if another kind of elf took the Spider Queen's test and failed it? Could you strip the drow out of the drider and replace it with another kind of elf?

Well, not easily, as it turns out. Some of the drider's powers are actually throwbacks to the 2nd edition **Dungeons & Dragons** game, when drow got extra spell-like abilities at 6th level. Taking away those drow-related abilities and coming up with others more suited to surface elves is actually a lot of work for a pretty lame monster.

But what if you approach the concept in a different way? You can make a thematically correct creature by using the tauric template from *Savage Species* to graft an elf onto a monstrous spider of appropriate size. The resulting creature looks rather like a drider, but its powers aren't just sad reflections of drow abilities.

Glythanna, the High Elf Drider

Glythanna was never a normal high elf. Even as a child, she was reclusive and nasty, especially to the other elf children. Eventually, Glythanna retreated into isolation and learned to support herself via thievery. But the longer she bore the stigma of social outcast, the more fascinated she became with the dark elves. Feeling a kinship of sorts with the other elves who had been spurned by her people, she devoured all the stories she could find about the drow. She studied their history, their fall from "grace," and their dark goddess.

By the time she was an adult, Glythanna had come to believe that she had been born in the wrong body and should have been a drow. She sought to rectify the error of her birth by devoting herself to Lolth and studying wizardry. Lolth was amused in her cruel way, but she paid no attention to Glythanna's prayers for many years.

Upon reaching 6th level, Glythanna ventured into the Underdark and sought out the drow. After much negotiating, Lolth's clergy allowed her to attempt the Spider Queen's test. But Lolth, who

Tauric Creature Options

Glythanna was created using the tauric template from *Savage Species*. The concept originally came from a discussion in which someone wondered aloud what would happen if Lolth decided to punish and transform creatures other than her drow. Thus Glythanna, the surface elf drider, was born.

Like other *Fight Club* creatures, Glythanna is presented here at three different character levels. [Creature Incarnations](#), the companion series to *Fight Club*, presents templated creatures designed around a theme. Glythanna really fits into both categories, but she is presented here to showcase her growing talents. If you like the tauric creature rendition, however, you might expand on this

was not looking for single converts among the surface elves, arranged the test so that Glythanna would fail and took special delight in inflicting the usual punishment upon her. The transformation worked out somewhat differently for Glythanna than it did for drow because she was a different kind of elf, but she still bore the obvious mark of Lolth's disfavor.

concept by experimenting further with the tauric template to create other unique "driders" for your PCs to encounter in the Underdark. For example, you could create a tauric mind flayer/spider, an aquatic kuo-toa/spider, or perhaps even a bizarre kuo-toa leviathan/kraken that lives in the deepest, darkest pools and is worshiped by the surrounding tribes as a god.

Combat

Tortured and conflicted, but still perversely loyal to Lolth, Glythanna roams both the Underdark and the surface world, inflicting suffering wherever she goes. Cunning and stealthy, she prefers to strike from behind or from far away rather than engage in melee. She particularly delights in killing drow because she believes that any drow who fall to her attacks must be inferior and therefore should not be allowed to pollute the bloodlines of Lolth's pure people.

In the statistics blocks below, the spells marked with * are taken from *Spell Compendium*. This book is worth having, so run out and buy it right now. Or if you wish, you can wait until after you've finished reading this article. But get it.

Glythanna (6th Level)

At this point, Glythanna is just starting out as a driderlike creature, so she still thinks a lot like the elf wizard she once was. She relies on her magic and her speed in combat and always tries to strike from a distance with spells or arrows.

Glythanna CR 9

Female tauric high elf/monstrous spider wizard 6

CE Large monstrous humanoid (elf)

Init +10; **Senses** Listen +2, Spot +10; darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Orc, Undercommon

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15

(-1 size, +3 Dex, +3 armor, +1 deflection, +2 natural)

hp 47 (10 HD)

Immune sleep

Fort +4, **Ref** +9, **Will** +9 (+11 against enhancements)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 20 ft.

Melee +1 keen longsword +9 (1d8+3/17-20) or

Ranged mwk shortbow +10 (1d6/x3) or

Melee +1 keen longsword +9/+4 (1d8+3/17-20) or

Ranged mwk shortbow +10/+5 (1d6/x3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +13

Special Actions web

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 6th):

3rd -- *dispel magic*, *displacement*, *haste*

2nd -- *false life*, *resist energy*, *scorching ray* (+9 ranged touch), *see invisibility*

1st -- *distract assailant**, *lesser orb of acid** (+9 ranged touch), *shield*, *sniper's shot**

0 -- *acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 14

SA web

SQ able to notice secret or concealed doors, summon familiar

Feats Combat Casting, Extend SpellB, Improved Initiative, Scribe ScrollB, Spellcasting Prodigy, Stealthy

Skills Climb +15, Concentration +8 (+12 casting in threatened areas), Decipher Script +8, Hide +9 (+13 in webs), Jump +6, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (Underdark local) +5, Listen +2, Move Silently +5 (+13 in webs), Search +5, Speak Language, Spellcraft +10, Spot +10

Possessions *bracers of armor* +3, +1 *keen longsword*, masterwork shortbow with 20 arrows in quiver, *ring of protection* +1, *pearl of power* (1st level spells)

Spellbook spells prepared plus 0 -- *arcane mark*, *daze*, *detect poison*, *disrupt undead*, *flare*, *ghost sound*, *light*, *mending*, *message*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue*; 1st -- *disguise self*, *expeditious retreat*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *lesser orb of sound**, *protection from good*, *ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd -- *blur*, *cat's grace*, *fox's cunning*, *ghoul touch*, *invisibility*, *Melf's acid arrow*; 3rd -- *deeper darkvision**, *fly*, *heroism*, *vampiric touch*

Web (Ex): Glythanna can spin webs like the spider whose form she has partially assumed. A single strand is strong enough to support her and one creature of the same size. Glythanna can throw a web eight times per day as if attacking with a net, except that her web has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets up to one size category larger than herself. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 16) or burst the web with a DC 20 Strength check. Both are standard actions.

Glythanna often creates sheets of sticky webbing up to 30 feet square and positions them to snare flying creatures, though she can also use them to trap prey on the ground. An approaching creature must succeed on a DC 20 Spot check to notice a web; otherwise it stumbles into it and becomes trapped as though by a successful web attack. Attempts to escape or burst the webbing gain a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to walk on or grab while pulling free. Each 5-foot section has 12 hit points, and sheet webs have damage reduction 5/--. Glythanna can move across her own web at her climb speed and can pinpoint the location of any creature touching her web.

Skills Glythanna has a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Spot checks, and a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. She can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. She uses her Dexterity modifier for Climb checks. Her bonus on Hide bonus increases to +8 while on her web, and she also gains a +8 bonus on Move Silently checks when traversing her web.

Hook "Though I have failed Lolth, still I serve and am tormented."

Glythanna (11th Level)

With some rogue training under her belt, and her hatred and bitterness burning within her, Glythanna became a guerilla fighter. At this level, she prefers to attack from the shadows and then scurry away, wearing down opponents with her hit-and-run tactics until they finally succumb. She is still not mighty enough to engage in melee with a lot of success, so she relies on her ability to strike and then tumble away.

Glythanna CR 14

Female tauric high elf/monstrous spider wizard 6/rogue 5

CE Large monstrous humanoid (elf)

Init +9; **Senses** Listen +12, Spot +20; darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Orc, Undercommon

AC 23, touch 16, flat-footed 18; uncanny dodge, +1 against traps
(-1 size, +5 Dex, +5 armor, +2 deflection, +2 natural)

hp 84 (15 HD)

Immune sleep

Resist evasion

Fort +6, **Ref** +15 (+16 against traps), **Will** +10 (+12 against enchantments)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 20 ft.

Melee +2 *keen longsword* +13 (1d8+4/17-20) or

Ranged mwk shortbow +15 (1d6/x3) or

Melee +2 *keen longsword* +13/+8 (1d8+4/17-20) or

Ranged mwk shortbow +15/+10 (1d6/x3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +10; **Grp** +16

Atk Options Point Blank Shot; sneak attack +3d6

Special Actions web

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 6th):

3rd -- *dispel magic*, *displacement*, *haste*

2nd -- *false life*, *resist energy*, *scorching ray* (+15 ranged touch), *see invisibility*

1st -- *distract assailant**, *lesser orb of acid** (+15 ranged touch), *shield*, *sniper's shot**

0 -- *acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 21, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 14

SA sneak attack +3d6, web

SQ able to notice secret or concealed doors, summon familiar, trapfinding

Feats Combat Casting, Extend SpellB, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Scribe ScrollB, Spellcasting Prodigy, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (ranged spells)

Skills Balance +7, Climb +17, Concentration +9 (+13 casting in threatened areas), Decipher Script +11, Hide +21 (+25 in webs), Jump +8, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (Underdark local) +7, Listen +12, Move Silently +17 (+25 in webs), Search +5, Speak Language, Spellcraft +10, Spot +20, Tumble +15

Possessions *bracers of armor* +5, *ring of protection* +2, +2 *keen longsword*, masterwork shortbow with 20 arrows, quiver, *gloves of Dexterity* +4, *pearl of power* (1st level), *pearl of power* (2nd level), *amulet of health* +2

Spellbook spells prepared plus 0 -- *arcane mark*, *daze*, *detect poison*, *disrupt undead*, *flare*, *ghost sound*, *light*, *mending*, *message*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue*; 1st -- *disguise self*, *expeditious retreat*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *lesser orb of sound**, *protection from good*, *ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd -- *blur*, *cat's grace*, *fox's cunning*, *ghoul touch*, *invisibility*, *Melf's acid arrow*; 3rd -- *deeper darkvision**, *fly*, *heroism*, *vampiric touch*

Web (Ex): Glythanna can spin webs like the spider whose form she has partially assumed. A single strand is strong enough to support her and one creature of the same size. Glythanna can throw a web eight times per day as if attacking with a net, except that her web has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets up to one size category larger than herself. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 19) or burst the web with a DC 23 Strength check. Both are standard actions.

Glythanna often creates sheets of sticky webbing up to 30 feet square and positions them to snare flying creatures, though she can also use them to trap prey on the ground. An approaching creature must succeed on a DC 20 Spot check to notice a web; otherwise it stumbles into it and becomes trapped as though by a successful web attack. Attempts to escape or burst the webbing gain a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to walk on or grab while pulling free. Each 5-foot section has 12 hit points, and sheet webs have damage reduction 5/-. Glythanna can move across her own web at her climb speed and can pinpoint the location of any creature touching her web.

Skills Glythanna has a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Spot checks, and a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. She can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. She uses her Dexterity modifier for Climb checks. Her bonus on Hide bonus increases to +8 while on her web, and she also gains a +8 bonus on Move Silently checks when traversing her web.

Hook "Lolth's enemies will suffer for my disgrace."

Glythanna (16th Level)

By 16th level, Glythanna has become a powerful wizard as well as a master of sneaking. At this point, she tends to rely on her prodigious spell arsenal to bring down her foes. If she can activate her *shadow form* and position herself close to a wall not more than 9 feet thick, she becomes considerably more confident about entering melee because she can always escape through the wall. Glythanna sneak attacks with her ranged touch spells when she can, and she uses *sniper's shot* and *distract assailant* to create situations that let her bring her sneak attacks to bear. But even in melee, she prefers spells over weapons.

Glythanna CR 19

Female tauric high elf/monstrous spider wizard 11/rogue 5

CE Large monstrous humanoid (elf)

Init +10; **Senses** Listen +12, Spot +20; darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Orc, Undercommon

AC 27, touch 20, flat-footed 21; uncanny dodge; +1 against traps
(-1 size, +6 Dex, +5 armor, +5 deflection, +2 natural)

hp 126 (20 HD)

Immune sleep

Resist evasion

Fort +8, **Ref** +17 (+18 against traps), **Will** +12 (+14 against enchantments)

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 20 ft.

Melee *thirsting blade* +17 (1d8+6 plus 1d6 nonlethal/19-20) or

Ranged +2 *shortbow* +19 (1d6+2/x3) or

Melee *thirsting blade* +17/+12/+7 (1d8+6 plus 1d6 nonlethal/19-20) or

Ranged +2 *shortbow* +19/+14/+9 (1d6+2/x3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +18

Atk Options Point Blank Shot; sneak attack +3d6

Special Actions web

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 11th):

6th level -- *freezing fog**

5th level -- reach *vampiric touch* (+17 ranged touch), *shadow form**, *viscid glob** (+17 ranged touch)

4th level -- split *scorching ray* (+17 ranged touch), *enervation*, *force missiles**, *thunderlance**

3rd level -- *deeper darkvision**, *displacement*, *fly*, *haste*, *heroism*

2nd level -- *blur*, *false life*, *fox's cunning*, *invisibility*, reach *touch of fatigue* (+17 ranged touch), *resist energy*, *scorching ray* (x3, +17 ranged touch)

1st level -- *distract assailant**, *expeditious retreat*, *lesser orb of sound** (+17 ranged touch), *ray of enfeeblement* (+17 ranged touch), *shield*, *sniper's shot**

0 level -- *acid splash*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*

Abilities Str 15, Dex 23, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 10, Cha 14

SA sneak attack +3d6, web

SQ able to notice secret or concealed doors, summon familiar, trapfinding

Feats Combat Casting, Extend SpellB, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Reach SpellB, Scribe ScrollB, Spellcasting Prodigy, Split Ray, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (ranged spells)

Skills Balance +8, Climb +18, Concentration +18 (+22 casting in threatened areas), Decipher Script +12, Hide +27 (+31 in webs), Jump +8, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +10, Knowledge (Underdark local) +10, Listen +12, Move Silently +18 (+26 in webs), Search +6, Speak Language, Spellcraft +21, Spot +20, Tumble +16

Possessions combat gear plus *bracers of armor +5*, *ring of protection +5*, *gloves of Dexterity +6*, *thirsting blade* (*Arms & Equipment Guide*), +2 *shortbow* with 20 arrows, quiver, *ring of wizardry* (II), *amulet of health +4*, *cloak of elvenkind*

Spellbook spells prepared plus 0 -- *arcane mark*, *dancing lights*, *daze*, *detect poison*, *disrupt undead*, *flare*, *ghost sound*, *light*, *mending*, *message*, *open/close*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *touch of fatigue*; 1st -- *disguise self*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *lesser orb of acid**, *protection from good*; 2nd -- *cat's grace*, *ghoul touch*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *see invisibility*; 3rd -- *dispel magic*, *vampiric touch*; 4th -- *bestow curse*, *dimension door*, *greater invisibility*, *orb of cold**, *orb of electricity**, *orb of force**; 5th -- *greater blink**, *draconic might**, *prismatic ray**, *summon monster V*, *xorn movement**, *wall of force*; 6th -- *disintegrate*, *greater dispel magic*, *ray of entropy**

Web (Ex): Glythanna can spin webs like the spider whose form she has partially assumed. A single strand is strong enough to support her and one creature of the same size. Glythanna can throw a web eight times per day as if attacking with a net, except that her web has a maximum range of 50 feet, with a range increment of 10 feet, and is effective against targets up to one size category larger than herself. An entangled creature can escape with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 23) or burst the web with a DC 27 Strength check. Both are standard actions.

Glythanna often creates sheets of sticky webbing up to 30 feet square and positions them to snare flying creatures, though she can also use them to trap prey on the ground. An approaching creature must succeed on a DC 20 Spot check to notice a web; otherwise it stumbles into it and becomes trapped as though by a successful web attack. Attempts to escape or burst the webbing gain a +5 bonus if the trapped creature has something to walk on or grab while pulling free. Each 5-foot section has 12 hit points, and sheet webs have damage reduction 5/--. Glythanna can move across her own web at her climb speed and can pinpoint the location of any creature touching her web.

Skills Glythanna has a +4 racial bonus on Hide and Spot checks, and a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks. She can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened. She uses her Dexterity modifier for Climb checks. Her bonus on Hide bonus increases to +8 while on her web, and she also gains a +8 bonus on Move Silently checks when traversing her web.

Hook "The fires of Lolth's destructive power are in my hands."

Additional Feats

The following feats are from sources other than the *Player's Handbook* and the *Monster Manual*.

Reach Spell (from *Complete Divine*): You may cast a spell that normally has a range of touch at any distance up to 30 feet. The spell effectively becomes a ray, so you must succeed on a ranged touch attack to bestow its effect upon the recipient. A reach spell uses up a spell slot two levels higher than the spell's actual level.

Spellcasting Prodigy (from *Player's Guide to Faerun*): For the purpose of determining bonus spells, treat the ability score that controls your spellcasting (Charisma for bards and sorcerers, Wisdom for divine spellcasters, or Intelligence for wizards) as 2 points higher than its actual value.

Split Ray (from *Complete Arcane*): You can cause any ray spell to fire one additional ray beyond the number normally allowed. The extra ray requires a separate ranged touch attack roll to hit and deals damage as normal. It can be fired at the same target as the first ray or at a different target, but all rays must be aimed at targets within 30 feet of each other and fired simultaneously. A split ray spell uses a spell slot two levels higher than the spell's actual level.

About the Author

Robert Wiese entered the gaming hobby through the Boy Scouts and progressed from green recruit to head of the most powerful gaming fan organization in the world. He served as head of the **RPGA** Network for almost seven years, overseeing the creation of the *Living Greyhawk* and *Living Force* campaigns, among other achievements. Eventually, he returned to private life in Reno, Nevada, where he is still involved in writing, organizing conventions, and playing. He also models proteins for the Biochemistry Department of the University of Nevada, Reno, and spends as much time as possible with his wife and many pets.

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